In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A connection element composed of metal and provided for a releasable connection of an electric motor with a machine or a machine part which is driven by the electric motor, the connecting element comprising at least one first abutment surface mountable on a wall of the machine or the machine part, and at least one second abutment surface fixedly ~~connected~~connectable with the electric motor, at least one of said at least one first abutment surface and said at least one second abutment surface being provided with a thin metallic hard coating applied on and non-detachably connected with said at least one abutment surface for providing efficient thermal insulation between the electric motor and the machine or the machine part, which thin metallic hard coating is a surface treatment inseparable from said at least one abutment surface, with a thermal conductivity having a value smaller than 2 W/Km ~~(Watt x Kelvin^{-1} x Meter^{-1})~~ so as to provide efficient thermal insulation between the electric motor and the machine or the machine part.

2. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has a nitrated titanium.

3. (currently amended) A connection element as defined in claim

1, wherein said thin ~~connecting~~metallic coating has a nitrated titanium mixed with carbon.

4. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has a nitrated alloy of titanium and aluminum.

5. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has a chromium mixed with carbon.

6. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has nitrated chromium.

7. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has tungsten carbide.

8. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has tungsten mixed with carbon.

9. (previously presented) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said thin metallic coating has a thickness between 1 μm and 10 μm.

10. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said first abutment surface is provided with a blind hole with an inner thread for screwing connection of the connecting element on the machine or on the machine part.

11. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 10, wherein said inner thread of said first abutment surface is provided with the thin metallic coating.

12. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein said second abutment surface is provided with a throughgoing opening for screw connection of the electric motor with the connecting element.

13. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 12, wherein said throughgoing opening is provided with the thin metallic coating.

14. (original) A connection element as defined in claim 1; and further comprising integrated cooling conduits for circulation of cooling fluid.

Claim 15 cancelled.

16. (currently amended) ~~A connection element as defined in claim 1~~ A connection element composed of metal and provided for a releasable connection of an electric motor with a machine or a machine part which is driven by the electric motor, the connecting element comprising at least one first abutment surface mountable on a wall of the machine or the machine part, and at least one second abutment surface fixedly connectable with the electric motor, at least one of said at least one first abutment surface and said at least one second abutment surface being provided with a thin metallic hard coating applied on and non-detachably connected with said at least one abutment surface for providing efficient thermal insulation between the electric motor and the machine or the machine part, which thin metallic hard coating is a surface treatment inseparable from said at least one abutment surface, with a thermal conductivity having a value smaller than 2 W/Km so as to provide efficient thermal insulation between the electric motor and the machine or the machine part, wherein the thin metallic hard coating is also applied in threaded openings of the connection element.

17. (new) A connection element as defined in claim 1, wherein the connecting element is elongated in a longitudinal direction and has two opposite faces spaced from one another in a transverse direction which is transverse to said longitudinal direction, said first abutment surface with said thin metallic hard coating being provided on

one of said faces, while said second abutment surface with said thin metallic hard coating is provided on the other face of said connecting element.

18. (new) A connection element as defined in claim 17; and further comprising another first abutment surface which his spaced in a longitudinal direction from said first abutment surface and provided with said thin metallic hard coating, and another second abutment surface which is spaced from said first mentioned second abutment surface in a longitudinal direction and is provided with said thin metallic hard coating, so that on said opposite faces of said connecting element two first abutment surfaces and two second abutment surfaces are arranged correspondingly and provided with said thin metallic hard coating.